

woman's risk of premature delivery by 35 percent. Premature infants typically need longer hospitalizations after they are born. I know what it is like to be the parent of a little baby who needed intensive medical care for an extended period of time from the moment she was born. By the way, she is getting ready to turn 24 right now.

Any new mother who has given selflessly to her country shouldn't have to worry about Congress standing in her way as she tries to give selflessly to her own child.

I thank my colleague and Chairman MILLER for their leadership on this issue, and I would urge the passage of this bill.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers at this time.

I would encourage all my colleagues to support H.R. 3016, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3016, "Veterans Employment, Education, and Healthcare Improvement."

I support this bill because it will benefit our veterans who have suffered debilitating injuries to their lower extremities as a result of their service to the United States.

Specifically, this bill clarifies the role of podiatrists in the Department of Veteran Affairs and increases their pay grade to match other VA physician compensation.

There is a need in the Department of Veteran Affairs to classify podiatrists as physicians.

Our veterans continue to suffer from a variety of foot and lower leg conditions as a direct result of their honorable service which can result from both traumatic and progressive etiologies.

A growing number of our veterans have diabetes, which puts them at risk for other disorders and even amputation.

The VA Podiatry Program Office spends a great deal of its time collaborating with a number of other programs developing and implementing initiatives relative to the prevention and treatment of diabetes and disorders related to diabetes.

Houston, Texas is home to the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center, in one of the nation's greatest medical centers; the MEDMC has 837 medical providers, but no board certified podiatrists.

Our veterans need and deserve specialized treatment and assistance for foot injuries.

My congressional district is home to over 25,000 veterans and as an avid supporter of Veteran Affairs I strongly support this bill.

As a supporter and co-sponsor of numerous bills to assist veterans, such as H.R. 90, the Healthcare Improvement Act, I strongly believe it is our duty to give our veterans the best care when they return home.

It is important we recognize podiatrists, who change the lives of our veterans, to be defined as physicians by the Department of Veteran Affairs, and increase their pay grade to reflect other VA physician compensation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3016, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to health care, educational assistance, and vocational rehabilitation, to establish the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CAREER-READY STUDENT VETERANS ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2360) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2360

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

*This Act may be cited as the "Career-Ready Student Veterans Act".*

#### SEC. 2. APPROVAL OF COURSES FOR PURPOSES OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) APPROVAL OF NON-ACCREDITED COURSES.—Subsection (c) of section 3676 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (14) as paragraph (16); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (13) the following new paragraphs:

"(14) In the case of a program designed to prepare an individual for licensure or certification in a State, the program meets any instructional curriculum licensure or certification requirements of such State.

"(15) In the case of a program designed to prepare an individual for employment pursuant to standards developed by a board or agency of a State in an occupation that requires approval or licensure, the program is approved or licensed by such board or agency of the State."

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(f)(1) The Secretary may waive the requirements of paragraph (14) or (15) of subsection (c) in the case of a program of education offered by an educational institution if the Secretary determines all of the following:

"(A) The educational institution is not accredited by an agency or association recognized by the Secretary of Education.

"(B) The program did not meet the requirements of such paragraph at any time during the two-year period preceding the date of the waiver.

"(C) The waiver furthers the purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary or would further the education interests of individuals eligible for assistance under such programs.

"(D) The educational institution does not provide any commission, bonus, or other incentive payment based directly or indirectly on success in securing enrollments or financial aid to any

persons or entities engaged in any student recruiting or admission activities or in making decisions regarding the award of student financial assistance, except for the recruitment of foreign students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal student assistance.

"(2) Not later than 30 days after the Secretary issues a waiver under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress notice of the waiver and the justification of the Secretary for issuing the waiver."

(c) APPROVAL OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMS.—Section 3675(b)(3) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking "and (3)" and inserting "(3), (14), and (15)"; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: "(or, with respect to such paragraphs (14) and (15), the requirements under such paragraphs are waived pursuant to subsection (f) of section 3676)".

(d) DISAPPROVAL OF COURSES.—Section 3679 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education described in section 3676(c)(14) or (15) unless the educational institution providing the course of education publicly discloses any conditions or additional requirements, including training, experience, or exams, required to obtain the license, certification, or approval for which the course of education is designed to provide preparation."

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3672(b)(2)(A)(i) of such title is amended by striking "An accredited" and inserting "Except as provided in paragraphs (14) and (15) of section 3676(c) of this title, an accredited".

(f) APPLICABILITY.—If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval by reason of an amendment made by this Act, an individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same educational institution while remaining continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters or terms) at that institution, any course so pursued by the individual at that institution while so continuously enrolled shall not be subject to disapproval by reason of such amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material they may have on H.R. 2360, as amended, in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The post-9/11 GI Bill provides student veterans with a wonderful opportunity to educate themselves for a job in the new economy. Thousands of training programs and schools have been approved for use of this program, which has benefited millions of veterans.

Unfortunately, there are some schools that are not simply providing quality education or training that sufficiently prepares students for jobs in their field of study.

The committee has found that, in some cases, students have been caught in a situation where the school they attended is properly accredited, but the program they are using at the school is not. This has led to situations where students have completed a training or a degree program only to find out that this training does not qualify them to receive the necessary credentials or take the necessary tests to practice in the career field for which they used their benefits.

This was clearly not the intention of the GI Bill, and I am glad that this bill would ensure that in order to be eligible for GI Bill benefits, an accredited or nonaccredited program must meet State accreditation, licensure, or certification standards. This requirement would not only protect student veterans but would also protect the integrity of the GI Bill for future generations.

I want to thank Chairman WENSTRUP of our Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and the author of the bill, Ranking Member TAKANO, for their work on this legislation, which has my full support.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2360, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2360, the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act. Mr. Speaker, I do so for two important reasons.

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The first is that it protects veterans using their GI Bill benefits by requiring that all career education programs meet proper accreditation, licensure, and certification requirements in order to be eligible for the GI Bill.

The second reason I am so happy to support H.R. 2360 is that it represents the very best of the legislative process. It is the product of collaboration between the majority and the minority, but it is also a collaboration between Congress and the VSO and academic communities.

I want to give due credit to the bill's original author, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity Ranking Member MARK TAKANO, and Chairman WENSTRUP and his staff for working so hard to ensure that the bill meets its goal of preparing student veterans for their chosen fields of study.

The Career-Ready Student Veterans Act puts in place a protection for student veterans which already exists for servicemen who use the Department of Defense tuition assistance benefits.

I am pleased that the bill creates this basic fairness and ensures that the GI Bill benefits help veterans earn credit that will lead to meaningful employment.

In addition to ensuring that career-education programs meet proper accreditation requirements, the bill also requires that they publicly disclose

any additional steps that the student veteran needs to take to prepare them for entry into their chosen profession.

I understand this legislation has passed out of committee in the Senate and enjoys bipartisan support there. Again, I want to congratulate the bill's original authors on this side and offer my strong support.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Phoenixville, Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 2360, the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act, a straightforward solution that will ensure that career education programs set our veterans on the proper path to their desired employment.

As a proud member of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and a cosponsor of this legislation, H.R. 2360 would ensure that GI Bill-eligible career education programs provide our veterans with the accreditation and credentials they need to build a career in the professional field or specialty of their choosing.

This bill requires that career-education programs that accept GI Bill tuition payments must have programmatic accreditation if accreditation is required for employment in the career for which the program is designed to prepare its students.

The bill also requires that career-education programs designed to prepare an individual for licensure or certification in a State must meet the curriculum and instructional requirements set by the State for licensure or certification.

Mr. Speaker, if our veterans invest their time and effort to learn a skill set, they will have the peace of mind to know they are on the right career-education path and the confidence to know that, if they work hard, they will receive the appropriate certification they need to start their desired employment.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Mr. TAKANO for his leadership on this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bipartisan legislation, H.R. 2360, the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act. This bill will ensure that our veterans are using their post-9/11 GI benefits at career-education programs that actually do what they say they do: prepare students for entry into a specific career field.

My legislation would require that, in order to be eligible to receive GI Bill benefits, programs have programmatic accreditation, if required by the State for employment in a specific field.

Programs also must prepare students for licensure or certification in a field,

if required by the State, and they must meet any State-mandated curricular or instructional requirements.

This closely mirrors language included in the fiscal year 2014 National Defense Authorization Act in relation to military tuition assistance.

We all know the importance of a good job in helping veterans successfully transition out of service and into civilian life. Education and training is often a necessary part of finding that job.

Unfortunately, too many veterans waste their time and hard-earned education benefits at career-education programs that don't actually prepare them for that career field. For example, most States require prospective lawyers to have graduated from a law program accredited by the American Bar Association in order to sit for the bar exam.

As we all know, you must pass the bar to practice law. When veterans unwittingly spend their GI Bill benefits at law programs not accredited by the ABA, they graduate with no prospects of becoming a lawyer in most States. My legislation will make sure that this no longer happens.

I thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member BROWN as well as Chairman WENSTRUP and my friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) for their support.

I urge all my colleagues to vote in favor of the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2360.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers at this time. I, too, urge a "yea" vote on H.R. 2360, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, I rise in support of H.R. 2360, the "Career-Ready Student Veterans Act of 2015."

This bill encourages new criteria for state approval of applications by educational institutions providing veterans with non-accredited courses.

H.R. 2360 respects the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) educational assistance, provides specific instructions for when the VA can waive requirements by the bill, and instructs the VA to submit to Congress notice of, and justification for, a waiver within 30 days of issuance.

The bill clarifies specific circumstances for when the VA shall disapprove a course of education and when a course shall not be subject to disapproval by reason of this Act.

Specifically, H.R. 2360 achieves these goals by:

1. Requiring programs designed to prepare individuals for state licensure or certification to fulfill any state instructional curriculum licensure or certification requirements

2. Providing conditions for the Department of Veterans Affairs to refer to when waiving requirements or disapproving a course of education

Finally, H.R. 2360 facilitates the approval of certain programs of education for the purposes of enhancing educational assistance provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs.

I am pleased that H.R. 2360 aligns with the significance of legislation I have introduced in the past.

I introduced H.R. 76, Helping to Encourage Real Opportunity for Veterans Transitioning from Battlespace to Workplace Act Of 2015. This bill also enhanced the educational options for veterans by focusing on the necessity to establish opportunities that facilitate the transition for veterans from the hostile armed force environment to school or workplace.

I introduced H.R. 78, New Chance for a New Start in Life Act of 2015. This bill addresses financial awareness pertaining to grants, and employment training programs to assist long-term unemployed persons to re-enter the workforce in areas projected to have the highest rates of demand.

Pertaining to educational institutions providing veterans with non-accredited courses, enforcement of the criteria for state approval of applications allows veterans to benefit from the improvement of the approval process.

H.R. 2360 is the first step toward enforcing this implementation strategy and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the "Career-Ready Student Veterans Act of 2015."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2360, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### LAKE BALDWIN VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC PROPERTY CONVEYANCE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4056) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as "The Community Living Center" at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4056

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LAND CONVEYANCE, LAKE BALDWIN VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC, ORLANDO, FLORIDA.

(a) CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the property known as "The Community Living Center", including any

improvements thereon, which is part of the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida, located at 5201 Raymond Street, Orlando, Florida.

(b) CONDITIONS OF CONVEYANCE.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the following conditions:

(1) The recipient shall agree to accept the conveyed real property in its condition at the time of the conveyance.

(2) The recipient shall agree not to apply the small house design model of the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Construction and Facilities Management Design Guide for Community Living Centers to the conveyed real property.

(c) USE OF PROPERTY.—The deed of conveyance for the parcels of real property conveyed under subsection (a) shall provide that all of the property be used and maintained for the sole purpose of providing nursing home, domiciliary, or adult day health care to veterans.

(d) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the parcels of real property conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by surveys satisfactory to the Secretary.

(e) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyances under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to add any extraneous material they may have on H.R. 4056, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4056, as amended, which was introduced by my colleague and fellow Floridian, Congressman MICA.

This bill would authorize the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to convey The Community Living Center on the Lake Baldwin campus in Orlando to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs.

This conveyance is in line with the VA's plans to repurpose the Lake Baldwin campus and would save VA from expending money, maintaining the property that the Department has no further use for while allowing this parcel of land to continue to be used in the service of our veterans.

I am grateful to Congressman MICA for sponsoring this legislation.

I would urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, H.R. 4056, introduced by my colleague from Florida, Mr. JOHN MICA, will authorize the VA to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs The Community Living Center at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Orlando, Florida.

When the Orlando VA center is fully completed, it will include 134 inpatient beds, an outpatient clinic, parking garage, chapel, and central energy plant.

One of the first buildings opened at the Orlando VA Medical Center was the 120-bed Community Living Center and the 60-bed domiciliary. Both are now open and accepting veterans. With the new facilities, it is not necessary for the VA to keep two facilities open in close proximity.

I am pleased that Mr. MICA was able to work with the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to take over this facility and continue to serve the veterans of central Florida.

Let me just say one other thing. I am just very impressed with the opening of this facility, the domiciliary, and also the clinic. We were able to get that facility open before the hospital opened, and it was taking veterans.

In addition to that, the Department of Defense gave that facility to the Department of Veterans Affairs—institutional memory is very important—and I am just very pleased that we will continue to use this facility for veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. MICA for bringing this before the House.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from the Seventh District of Florida (Mr. MICA), who authored this piece of legislation.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank Chairman MILLER and also thank Ranking Member BROWN for their strong support in helping to expedite this legislation.

This is a simple measure. It does transfer a vacant 120-bed VA nursing care building in Orlando's VA veteran Baldwin Park facility to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, as the chairman described.

As the ranking member mentioned, we actually have opened a 120-bed new facility to the south of Orlando and a 60-bed domiciliary unit also open now for nearly 2 years. Adjacent to that is a new hospital at Lake Nona.

I think Ms. BROWN was with me back in 1999 when this 120-bed nursing care facility was dedicated. The facility is not that old. It was closed 2 years ago when we opened the new facility, and the VA used that building and some of the rooms for transition for training for employment.

Now the new hospital is open. The new 120-bed facility is open to the south and domiciliary unit. We have agreement from the State of Florida to take that facility. You might be interested to know why central Florida would want another veterans facility.